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TSU CITY CASE POSTMORTEM:

Where Do We Go From Here?

Some 100 persons participated in a meeting held at Shinanomachi Church, Tokyo, on Sept. 11, to discuss the Supreme Court decision on the Tsu City Case (KNL No. 116). The decision, supported by 10 of the 15 judges, declared the Shinto groundbreaking ceremony to be legal and not in conflict with the constitution. Discussion focussed on the results and meaning of this decision and its implications for efforts to preserve the constitutional separation of religion and state.

Mr. KOIKE Kenji, an attorney for Mr. SEKIGUCHI Seiichi, the appellee, explained that the Supreme Court could not have handled this case as a constitutional issue had there been no citizens' movement protesting a violation of the separation of religion and state. He sees the majority decision as based on three factors: --

1) *Realism rather than idealism.* After supporting and clarifying the historical significance of the disestablishment of religion, the majority opinion uses the word "however" to introduce its reasons for departing from the strict ideal to a compromise with the realities of the particular situation.

2) *Majority ignorance of minority opinion.* The decision relies on the "feelings of the common people" and "popular understanding" as criteria to determine that this ceremony was not "religious." As judge FUJIBAYASHI Ekizo pointed out in his minority opinion, since democracy depends on the security of human rights at the fundamental level, the religious and conscientious freedom of a minority should not be violated, even by a decision of the majority.

3) *Discrimination in favor of Shinto.* According to this Supreme Court decision, the feelings of the common people support the view that the Shinto groundbreaking ceremony is not religious. On the other hand, a similar Christian or Buddhist ceremony would definitely be regarded as religious by the common people. This is an obvious discrimination.

Mr. IMAMURA Tsuguo, chief attorney for the case, advocated a nationwide campaign on behalf of this issue, pointing out that most Japanese cannot understand a strict interpretation of religion as a matter of human rights. He spoke against pessimism, noting

that the opposition quotes only the favorable points in the text of the decision, keeping silent about adverse points. We should make use of the points in the statement that are in support of religious freedom, he said; and called for serious study of the decision in search of hints as to how to guard most effectively against government violations of the principle of disestablishment of religion.

Rev. TOMURA Masahiro, pioneer and veteran of the Kyodan's anti-Yasukuni movement, discussed the Tsu decision in relation to the Yasukuni Shrine Bill. He is concerned that parts of the majority opinion may be used to support a re-establishment of Yasukuni Shrine. He warned against an inconspicuous accumulation of minor violations being eventually confirmed legally. Because Japan lacks a concept of freedom of faith in its historical background, we must struggle against ourselves as we struggle against the Emperor cult: a particular religion of the Japanese people. Tomura concluded by pointing to the probable repercussions of the next Daijosaï, the (Shinto thanksgiving festival accompanying the accession of a new emperor to the throne), expressing his disappointment that the Supreme Court decision gives only secondary importance to Emperor Hirohito's "Declaration of Humanity" speech of 1946.

Mr. NISHIKAWA Shiganori, called for constant continuing vigilance against any violation of the principle of separation of religion and state, pointing out that the Tsu decision was in reference to one case only and not to the Jichinsai (groundbreaking rite) in general.

Mr. SEKIGUCHI expressed his gratitude for the support received from the attorneys and the many comrades who joined in the long struggle begun in 1965. Although the final decision was unfavorable he does not feel defeated, because of the encouragement received from supporters.

At the close of the meeting a resolution appealing to the Supreme Court to amend its decision for the sake of the Constitution was adopted unanimously. It was agreed to maintain a close watch to prevent any further violations of the separation of religion and state.

OOSIMA Kōiti, Chairman
Yasukuni Shrine Issue Committee

CHURCH RESPONDS to HOKKAIDO VOLCANO

On Sunday morning, August 7, Mt. Usu suddenly erupted, sending up clouds of smoke and raining ashes on towns and farms in the vicinity of Lake Toya, Hokkaido. Even in Sapporo, 150 km away, the shower of ashes covered automobile windshields, causing severe traffic jams.

With the senic Lake Toya region at the height of the tourist season it was indeed lucky that no deaths or injuries were reported. The depth of the fallen ash varied from a few inches to three feet depending on the direction of the wind at the time. The Kyodan's Toyako Church, at the foot of Mt. Usu, was covered by only three inches of ash. Yet there remains a sense of impending danger with earth tremors felt every 15 or 20 minutes and the mountain continuing to rise at the rate of 2 feet a day. Even the slightest rainfall turns the volcanic ash into mud slides, increasing the damage to livestock and property.

As soon as Hokkai District was able to ascertain the safety of church members and begin to assess the damage, it set up an Emergency Committee and appealed to the Kyodan's Committee on Social Concerns to raise funds throughout Japan while considering what Hokkai District and its member churches could do in response to the needs. One of the steps agreed on is work camps to remove volcanic ash from churches and farms.



The Toyako Church has been without a pastor since last spring, but is doing what it can in cooperation with the district and sub-district. When an elderly member of Toyako Church, who runs a souvenir shop, saw that the church was not damaged, he said, "This is a warning from God to man of the consequences of ignoring and exploiting nature in our desire for riches."

One of the problems is that this calamity occurred in a tourist area. The danger of further damage is causing tourists to avoid



the area, making it impossible for those depending on the tourist industry to have any prospect of recovery. In the midst of all the loss and uncertainty the church is called to serve the needs of those around it.

On hearing of the relief efforts being made, the United Church Board for World Ministries has already sent \$2,000 to the Kyodan from the U.S. as a token of Christian concern for those affected.

(YAJIMA Shin'ichi)

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Kyodan's COC Delegation Meets

Possible directions for future relations with overseas churches were a focal concern at the meeting, Sept. 13, of the delegates elected to represent the Kyodan as members of the Council of Cooperation. Moderator TODA Isuke invited prepared remarks by ONO Ichiro, Alden MATTHEWS, and SUGASAWA Kuniaki. Although a variety of perspectives were aired, agreement was reached on a set of proposals to be presented to the Kyodan Executive Committee, Nov. 7-8. Featured in these proposals were: --

- 1) a call for a rationale for cooperative relationships with overseas churches based on mutuality in mission;
- 2) a recognition that future relations should not be limited to North American churches, but have a balanced global perspective;
- 3) a concern to establish an appropriate forum for discussing common issues with mission agencies of related churches;
- 4) a hope that healthy communication can be renewed among the Kyodan, Social Work League, and Schools Council;
- 5) a proposal that the Commission on the Mission of the Church convene an informal policy consultation (with JNAC members and others) prior to the JNAC Annual Meeting next April.

(Harry Burton-Lewis)

REV. ENOMOTO of ASHRAM MOVEMENT DIES

The Rev. ENOMOTO Yasuro, who died in a Los Angeles hospital July 27, 1977, was one of the most remarkable Kyodan pastors of our time. I think it was in 1960 that I happened to read a magazine article calling people to "a Prayer Gathering." It caught my attention because the person organizing the gathering was Rev. Enomoto, pastor of Seikō Church in Kyoto, who used to sit next to me in seminary. His statement of purpose impressed me: "This gathering is not for study or discussion, but solely for the purpose of praying." This was the beginning of the Ashram movement in Japan, founded by Rev. Enomoto.



The name "Ashram" was not used until after Rev. Enomoto moved to Imabari Church, Shikoku. Beginning with the first "Imabari Ashram" in 1968, one was held each October for nine years. The efforts made by Rev. Enomoto and the members of Imabari Church were really a marvel. I heard that in order to ensure the success of a single Ashram, the Imabari Church held an early morning prayer meeting every day for a year. Their prayers were answered by the great success of the Ashram, with people coming from all over Japan and even from Taiwan. The movement began to spread, and under the leadership of Rev. Enomoto similar Ashrams were held in cities throughout Japan and Taiwan.

As the Ashram circle widened it became impossible for Rev. Enomoto to remain in a single church. In October 1975 he left Imabari Church to establish his long-prayed-for Ashram Center in Ohmi-Hachiman, Shiga Prefecture, and began to devote all his energies to this movement. He even began to lay plans for an Ashram Seminary.

But for some years Rev. Enomoto's health had been failing from such a strenuous pace of activity. On July 12 he left Haneda for the U.S. in response to an invitation from the American Holiness Church, and while on the plane he began to cough up blood. He was taken to a hospital immediately upon landing at Los Angeles; but despite prayers every night in churches throughout Japan by his Ashram friends, he finally succumbed at 12:30 a.m. on July 27.

It was not until after the loss of Rev. Enomoto that we came to fully realize his greatness. In recent years the churches of the Kyodan have shown a remarkable deepen-

ing and growth in the area of social concern and action. However, on the other hand, the poverty of our inner life has also been revealed. In the midst of such a time, it was Rev. Enomoto who emphasized the fundamental principle that faith, through prayer, listens quietly to the voice of God. It is of great significance that he awakened many others to this need. Even after his passing his spirit lives on in those he influenced in the Ashram movement, thereby continuing to pour abundantly into the life of the church

HIRAYAMA Takehide
Former Moderator of
Shikoku District

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MINISTERS' WIVES' CONFERENCE HELD

At the end of August 70 wives of ministers gathered at the YMCA Conference Center, Gotemba, for the 2nd Kyodan Ministers' Wives' Conference. Coming from 12 of the Kyodan's 16 districts, the participants, ranging in age from 20 to 65, spent 3 days together discussing such specific matters as the role of the minister's wife in the church, the church economy, wives working outside the church, Christian education in the family, and interpersonal relationships with laypersons and with their minister-husbands.

Spurred by 7 presentations, the conference divided into discussion groups to deal with several acute and difficult problems. The physical setting is one of these. Often the parsonage and church are so close together that the minister's wife is expected to be janitor, church secretary, telephone counselor, and kindergarten teacher in addition to being wife and mother. Yet often she has no vote in the church's decision making process. On the other hand, the way she relates to others influences the well-being of the church, for better or worse, far out of reasonable proportion. Participants received encouragement toward making priority choices in their busy daily lives.

Mrs. OMURA, whose husband is a blind minister serving a church in Tokyo, came to the conference to find friends, appeal for understanding of the problems faced by the blind, and get help in finding sighted persons willing to marry blind persons.

Two wives from Okinawa presented problems deeply rooted in the Okinawan historical and political context of distrust of mainland politics and the overwhelming presence of US and Japanese military forces. The military presence is a constant remind-

Ministers' Wives' Conference (continued)

er of the suffering related to World War II and the Vietnam war. When water was scarce this summer the US military bases, occupying the main part of the island, used most of the available supply, leaving little for the Okinawans. Mrs. TAMANAHA, who grows most of the vegetables for her family, wept over the inequality. Mrs. TAIRA, who goes to work at 3:00 a.m. in a production line making lunches for day laborers, appealed for donations of books for children, and reported that the Christian peace movement in Okinawa is symbolically expressing opposition to war by withholding the portion of taxes that would go to military budgets.

Praying together in the name of Jesus Christ, the participants pledged themselves to deepening and widening their fellowship as they look forward to meeting again next year.

(Aiko CARTER)

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NEWS NOTES

** Rev. & Mrs. FUJIMOTO Haruyoshi and their two children departed from Haneda on Sept. 18 for a three year term of ministry to Japanese in the New York Metropolitan Area.

** Mrs. KOBAYASHI Etsuko attended the Central Committee Meeting of the World Council of Churches, July 28 - Aug. 6, as a substitute for Mrs. OKUDA Michiko who was unable to attend. Rev. Mrs. KOBAYASHI is one of the pastors of Sakuradai Church, Tokyo, and superintendent of the church kindergarten. She attended the Asian Seminar of Methodist Women in Hong Kong in 1975 and the World Methodist Assembly in Dublin in 1976.

** 100 years of Japanese Christian mission in North America will be celebrated Oct. 5-7 in San Francisco, where the first Christian Church "Gospel Society" was organized Oct. 6, 1877. The theme will be "Bridge the Pacific with Fellowship of Love and Prayer."

SUNDAY-SCHOOL CHURCH-SCHOOLHISTORY PUBLISHED

The NCCJ Division of Christian Education has just published, in a beautiful two-tone cover, a history of the Sunday Church School movement in Japan. The occasion is the 70th anniversary of the founding of the National Sunday School Association in 1907. The editorial committee, chaired by Rev. OKAMURA Shoji of the Baptist Church, included an historian, two Christian Education scholars, secretaries for Christian Education for the NCC, the Kyodan, and the Japan Baptist Convention. Miss YOSHIOKA Harue (KNL #115) was a member of the team.

The book is divided into five parts, each dealing with one of the following historical periods:

1. Preparatory Period -- 1859-1906
2. Period of Expansion -- 1907-1930
3. Wartime Period -- 1931-1945
4. Reconstruction Period -- 1946-1959
5. Period of Theological Searching -- 1960-1977

The first work of its kind since the publication by the Sunday School Association of "Sunday School History in Japan" in 1941, the book was featured at the 70th Anniversary Celebration, Sept. 23-24, in the Toyo Eiwa Jogakuin auditorium, Tokyo.

(MIDZUNO Makoto)

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Corrected List of
CCA Committee Members from Japan
(cf. KNL #116)

Presidium: Rev. NAKAJIMA Masaaki

General Committee: Mrs. SEKIYA Ayako (NCCJ Vice Chairperson)

Message & Communication Unit: Mr. TAKADO Kaname (also the Moderator for Communication)

Unity: Rev. KOMINAMI Shoichi (Seiko-kai)

Life & Action Unit: Rev. SHINMI Hiroshi
Mr. KUSUNOKI Toshiaki (Youth)

Education: Rev. IMAHASHI Akira

Justice & Service Unit: Prof. TAKENAKA Masao

Urban Rural Mission: Rev. TAKAMI Toshihiro
Development & Service: Mr. UEDA Jintaro